

Sports+Outdoors

Redmond JROTC sets sights on nationals

BY NICK ROSENBERGER •
Redmond Spokesman

The Junior Reserve Officer Corps students focused Oct. 28 as a projector whirred above their heads in a small building at Redmond High School. Clicks filled the room as students loaded their rifles.

“One minute remaining,” said Lt. Col. Doug Seal.

The students peered through their scopes, checking last minute details before they started the competition against Franklin Parish, a high school in Louisiana. The range went hot and students began firing their air rifles in a burst of clacks, small metal pellets striking the paper targets downrange.

“Take your time. Focus. Relax,” said Seal.

Eye closed. Breath in. Breath out. Look through sights. Breath in. Breath out. Hold. Aim. Click.

This scene plays out every week for the Redmond High School Marine Corps JROTC marksmanship team as they compete against other schools across the country, all chasing the national championship in the Orion National Air Rifle League.

RHS is currently ranked in sixth place in the Elite Division and first place in the Marine Corps JROTC Conference.

The league is based off Olympic rifle competitions and has students compete in three positions: prone, standing and kneeling. Sheets downrange are set up with 12 targets of nine concentric circles. The students earn more points the closer a shot lands to the center.

Sheets from each position are collected and input into the computer system by Andres Saldana, a junior at RHS and the team's statistical officer. The competing school anywhere else in the United States follows the same process.

The scores of the top four shooters from each school are combined for the final score. The top four at Friday's competition were Simeon Lovric (265.6), Aidan Waterman (264.6), Dolores “Dee Dee” Lopez (263.1) and Callan McNe (246.9).

“It's a concentration sport,” Saldana said. “How you win is by the decimal.”

Lt. Col. Doug Seal, a JROTC instructor and coach of the marksmanship team, said the sport is a great way for students to learn how to relax and focus, block out distractions and control their minds. The slightest shift or break in concentration can sway a pellet's trajectory off course.

“(It) really develops a sense



Chase Gottfried looks through his rifle scope during a JROTC marksmanship competition on Oct. 28 at Redmond High School against Franklin Parish High School in Louisiana.

Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman



Lt. Col. Doug Seal debriefs with his students after a JROTC marksmanship competition on Oct. 28 in Redmond against Franklin Parish High School in Louisiana.

Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman



Dee Dee Lopez takes aim Oct. 28 at Redmond High School during a JROTC marksmanship competition against Franklin Parish High School in Louisiana.

Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman

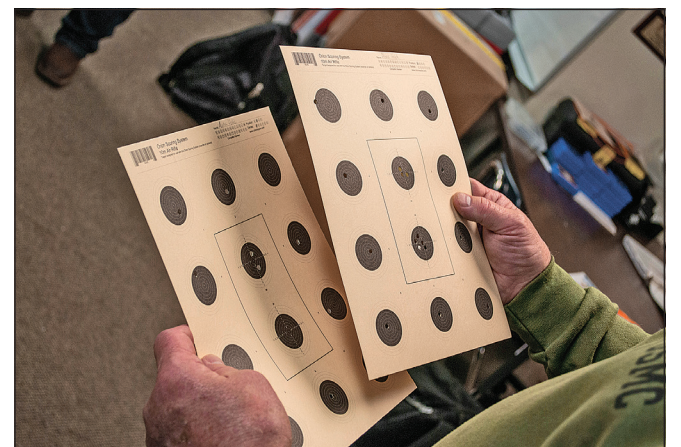
“You can always be better,” said Simeon Lovric, the top shooter in Friday's competition.

“What happens, happens,” said Alana Hatch, a freshman who competed for the first time on Friday. “Honestly at the end of the day it's all feedback, more so than not doing well. It's knowing how to do better next time.”

According to Gavvin McLaren, a sophomore at RHS who started marksmanship last year, it can be difficult to prepare for competition. He said much of the sport is training your mental foundation to just focus on what you're doing.

“The smallest sound can completely mess you up,” he said. “The smallest air change can make you completely think differently.”

The rifle is an equalizing force, Seal said. Prepped cor-



Lt. Col. Doug Seal examines targets during a JROTC marksmanship competition on Oct. 28 at Redmond High School against Franklin Parish High School in Louisiana.

Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman

“All we want you to do is get what you're capable of and do your best. Nothing beats that feeling when you've done your best and you see the result.”

— Lt. Col. Doug Seal, Redmond High School Marine Corps JROTC marksmanship team

rectly, it is entirely in the hands done your best and you see the result.”

To qualify for nationals, the team has to hit a score of 1050 for the top four shooters. RHS crushed Franklin Parish's 775.7 score, but was just shy from qualifying for nationals with a final score of 1040.2.

All students have to pass a firearm safety test with 100 percent and get parent signoffs before they can even touch a rifle, Seal said.

“All we want you to do is get what you're capable of and do your best,” Seal told the team after the competition. “Nothing beats that feeling when you've

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Central Oregon needs basketball officials

The Central Oregon Basketball Officials Association is scheduled to hold its first on-court training Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Central Christian School gym on Airport Way in Redmond. No experience is needed to attend.

There is an urgent need for high school basketball officials in Central Oregon, according to the COBOA.

Nationwide, there has been a steady decline of high school sports officials over the years. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the decline of officials has been unprecedented, both across the nation and in Cen-

tral Oregon.

The Central Oregon Basketball Association is still significantly below the 2018-19 number of officials. The COBOA services 17 high schools and 17 middle schools throughout Central Oregon.

For more information on how to become an official, visit www.osaa.org/new-officials/index.html.

For more information on the COBOA, contact Mike Smith at 541-389-5204 or mikesmith-coboa@gmail.com, or Daryl Rothenbucher at 541-416-0880 or daryl@wildwestpm.net.

—Spokesman staff report

Redmond teen awarded Eagle Scout rank

BY TIM TRAINOR
Redmond Spokesman

Matthew Mathis, a senior at Ridgeview, was honored during Friday night's football game for earning the highest rank in Boy Scouts of America: Eagle Scout.

Mathis is also a varsity athlete on the Ridgeview football team, playing running back

and linebacker. He is also a varsity wrestler and baseball player.

For his recognition, Mathis carried the American flag onto the field during the pregame Pledge of Allegiance and was honored for earning Eagle Scout.

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» Matthew Mathis and his father Shane, left, prepare for Matthew to be awarded the Eagle Scout, the highest rank in scouting.

Courtesy photo

